

# THE POINT

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CHAMBER



May 2018

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## “Medical” Marijuana SQ Will Negatively Impact Businesses

The Board of Directors of the Greater Oklahoma City Chamber recently voted to oppose State Question 788, the so-called medical marijuana bill that would potentially prevent employers from operating a drug-free workplace. The Chamber has joined the Anti-SQ788 coalition to defeat the proposal at the polls in June.

SQ 788 would allow any Oklahoma Board-certified physician—which includes veterinarians, dentists and chiropractors—to prescribe a medical marijuana license for two years. Instead of having specific requirements for what constitutes a medical need for a license, the threshold for justifying a prescription is extremely low. A patient only needs to “articulate a medical need” to qualify, so patients who say they occasionally get headaches would qualify for a two-year license.

“Simply put, State Question 788 is NOT a medical marijuana law,” said Roy H. Williams, president and

CEO of the Greater Oklahoma City Chamber. “It is poorly written public policy that would enact one of the most liberal marijuana laws in the nation. Particularly concerning to the Chamber are the restrictions that it would place on Oklahoma’s businesses.”

Under the language of SQ 788, the ability for most employers to be a drug-free workplace would be questioned, if not outright abolished. SQ 788 states that employers “may not discriminate against a person in hiring, termination...or otherwise penalize a person based upon status as a medical marijuana license holder” or “based upon the results of a drug test showing positive for marijuana or its components.” The only exception to the above mandate is unless it would “cause an employer to imminently lose a monetary or licensing-related benefit under federal law.” In addition to the logistical and legal nightmare that SQ 788 would generate if passed, employers should also expect

*Continued on page 5*

## Convention and Visitor Industry Continues to Grow



*In the Oklahoma City MSA, the travel industry provides more than 32,798 jobs, with \$747 million in payroll.*

The hospitality industry is a major player in the overall health of the statewide and local economies, and the growth of that industry shows no signs of slowing down. According to data prepared by Dean Runyan Associates for the Oklahoma Tourism and Recreation Department, hospitality continues to be the third-largest industry in Oklahoma and has a significant impact on the local economy.

In 2016, the industry generated \$8.6 billion in travel-spending revenue statewide and \$120 million in state tax revenue. In the Oklahoma City Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), the travel industry provides more than 32,798 jobs, with \$747 million in payroll. The industry also generates \$100 million in local tax receipts, dollars that help fund important city services, infrastructure improvements and quality-of-life projects.

“We are seeing decades of investment in Oklahoma City’s quality of life pay off,” said Natalie Shirley, president and CEO of the National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum and vice chair of convention and visitor development

*Continued on page 12*

# Chamber Launches Small Business Newsletter

As part of the ongoing effort to strengthen businesses in Greater Oklahoma City, the Chamber is launching a new suite of programs called Business University to specifically address the needs of small businesses. The first product in that program, the Business University e-newsletter, is launching this month.

The Business University e-newsletter will feature custom content on various aspects of import to small businesses, including human resources, marketing, entrepreneurship, management, office productivity and more. The newsletter, which is sponsored by Arvest Bank, will be sent to the Chamber's Core, Associate and Emerging Leader members (investment levels ranging from \$500-\$1,500).

"We know many times owners and employees of small businesses have to wear multiple hats, so we're really trying to provide a variety of useful content that can help with some of those needs," said Cynthia Reid, vice president of marketing and communications for the Chamber. "The Business University e-newsletter will

also highlight networking and other educational events that may be of interest if you're working to grow your business."

For more information about the newsletter, contact Nathan Fisher, director of communications, at [nfisher@okcchamber.com](mailto:nfisher@okcchamber.com) or 405-297-8936.



*The Chamber is launching a new suite of programs called Business University to address the needs of small businesses in the region.*

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# Leadership Notes

## *Acknowledging Oklahoma City's work on criminal justice reform*

As the largest city in the area served by the Oklahoma County jail, it should come as no surprise that the Oklahoma City Police Department is the largest client of the county jail—or as Police Chief Bill Citty wryly observed at our recent Chamber Forum, they are the largest contributor to the problem of overcrowding.

For this reason, Chief Citty is a critical person to have at the table when discussing criminal justice reform, and luckily for us, his department has been having the conversation about who should be in the jail and why for more than 14 years now.

OCPD worked with the Oklahoma City Municipal Court and Presiding Judge Philippa C. James to stop putting people in jail because they couldn't afford to pay a fine. Instead, the municipal court created additional hearings to more fairly deal with a person's failure to pay. It's a model that other cities have used successfully, and most cities don't see an adverse effect on crime rates.

Without OCPD taking a look at why people were being arrested and placed in the Oklahoma County Jail and Judge James' work to prevent our jail from turning into a debtors' prison, it's likely we wouldn't have seen the jail's occupancy drop to 1671 for non-Department of Corrections offenders in April. It wasn't too long ago that the occupancy average was significantly higher. Chief Citty and Judge James are taking a stand to make sure the law is administered fairly in Oklahoma City, and their efforts are providing the momentum we need to keep reforms going.

Sincerely,



Roy H. Williams, CCE  
Chamber CEO & President



Roy H. Williams, CCE  
President & CEO

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Greater Oklahoma City Chamber  
President & CEO

## THE POINT!

ISSUE #3519 - May 2018

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The Point (ISSN 1075-6264) is published monthly by the Greater Oklahoma City Chamber, 123 Park Avenue, Oklahoma City, OK 73102.

### POSTMASTER:

Send address changes to 'The Point!', Greater Oklahoma City Chamber, 123 Park Avenue, Oklahoma City, OK 73102 or e-mail thepoint@okchamber.com.

SUBSCRIPTIONS: \$15 per year included in Chamber membership; nonmembers, \$25 per year within the U.S. Periodicals Postage paid at Oklahoma City. Advertising rates upon request. Publisher reserves the right to refuse any advertising.

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# Chamber Opposes SQ 788 (cont'd from page 1)

workers' compensation rates to increase. In at least five states where medical marijuana is legal, it is treated as a permissible workers' compensation treatment that requires insurer reimbursement. It is natural to expect on-the-job claims for injuries to increase if it becomes a way to pay for marijuana usage.

The proposal essentially creates a special class of citizen that cannot be discriminated against for those holding a medical marijuana license—and with disturbing consequences. Proponents of this state question recently consented to the fact that under the law, a hotel could not be marijuana smoke-free. Some lawyers believe a restaurateur, under the Oklahoma proposal, would have no option but to allow marijuana to be smoked in a restaurant without a risky lawsuit. Furthermore, municipalities are expressly prohibited from regulating the industry. Some legal minds believe this would include not being able to regulate where it is smoked and would open up parks and public venues like the Chesapeake Energy Arena to the medical use of smokable marijuana.

Beyond the negative impacts to Oklahoma businesses, SQ 788 would have consequences on Oklahoma's

already-strapped government. The state system of mental health and substance abuse services is already beyond its capacity. With the expected increase in mental health and substance abuse treatment as a result of this proposed law, the passage of SQ 788 would strain funding for other core services of state government. SQ 788 proposes a 7 percent tax on medical marijuana sales, but that isn't enough to cover the administrative and social service costs. Most states have marijuana taxes exceeding 20 percent. SQ 788 would also burden the already-troubled Oklahoma Department of Health with immediate responsibilities. The proposed law would incentivize medical marijuana license holders to enroll in SoonerCare, Oklahoma's Medicaid program, by reducing the cost to get a license for those covered by the program. The Oklahoma Health Care Authority, the organization who administers SoonerCare, has faced budget shortfalls in recent months because of dwindling state and federal funds. The increased number of claims could lead to rate cuts to Medicaid providers in the state.

For these reasons, the Chamber believes that SQ 788 should be defeated at the polls on June 26. SQ 788 is not medical marijuana – vote NO on June 26.



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# UPCOMING EVENTS

## Register Your Summer Interns in InternOKC



Want to help build Oklahoma City's next generation of leaders? Enroll your interns in InternOKC, part of the Chamber's Greater Grads program. The three-week program will give interns a chance to meet and network with their peers while learning about the advantages of building a career in Greater Oklahoma City after they graduate.

At each session, your intern(s) will enjoy interesting and informative guest speakers and learn more about Oklahoma City. The first session is Wednesday, June 13, from 2:30 to 5 p.m. at the Chevy Bricktown Events Center. The cost to participate is \$125 per intern. View the event schedule and register at [www.greatergrads.com/summerintern](http://www.greatergrads.com/summerintern).

Special thanks to Signature Sponsor SandRidge Energy, Inc. and Greater Grads Benefactors American Fidelity Corporation, The Boeing Company, Love's Travel Stops & Country Stores, Inc., OGE Energy Corp. SandRidge Energy, Inc., and University of Central Oklahoma College of Business.



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# Attend These Upcoming Chamber Forums

Since January, the Chamber has hosted monthly Chamber Forums to start discussions about Oklahoma City's major successes, challenges and ways that the business community can stay involved.

The Chamber will host its May Chamber Forum, set for May 16, on the topic of the remaking of the visitor environment in Oklahoma City. The event will focus on the synergies around Scissortail Park, the Omni Hotel, MAPS3 downtown Convention Center and the American Indian Cultural Center & Museum.

Confirmed speakers include James Pepper Henry, executive director of the American Indian Cultural Center and Museum, and Maureen Heffernan, executive director of the Myriad Gardens Foundation. Learn more and reserve your seat at [www.okcchamber.com/visitor](http://www.okcchamber.com/visitor).

Save the date for the June Chamber Forum on June 12, where attendees will hear a legislative recap and a discussion around State Question 788 on medical marijuana and its potential impact to businesses. Register at [www.okcchamber.com/recap](http://www.okcchamber.com/recap).

Chamber Forums are held each month from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Vast, 333 W Sheridan Ave. Special thanks to Signature Sponsor Cox Business.

## May 16

### Chamber Forum

Time: 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.  
Location: Vast, 333 W Sheridan Ave.  
[www.okcchamber.com/visitor](http://www.okcchamber.com/visitor)

## June 5

### Sunset Reception

Time: to 6 p.m.  
Location: Stephenson Cancer Center - OU Board of Regents, SCC 6043  
[www.okcchamber.com/sunset2018](http://www.okcchamber.com/sunset2018)

## June 12

### Chamber Forum

Time: 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.  
Location: Vast, 333 W Sheridan Ave.  
[www.okcchamber.com/recap](http://www.okcchamber.com/recap)

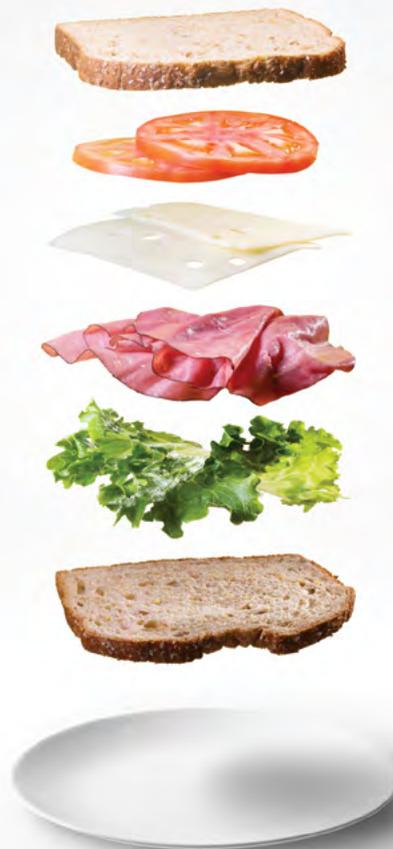
## June 12

### Member Orientation

Time: 4 to 6 p.m.  
Location: Chamber offices, 123 Park Ave.  
[www.okcchamber.com/orientation](http://www.okcchamber.com/orientation)

# HUNGER DOESN'T TAKE A VACATION

More than 60 percent of students in Oklahoma rely on free and reduced lunches during the school year. For these kids, the summer months can be hard. Feed the Children is proud to partner with community organizations to provide nutritious meals through our Summer Food and Education Program. By working together, we can defeat childhood hunger.



[feedthechildren.org](http://feedthechildren.org)



# Connect with the Chamber's Audience Through the Total Resource Development Campaign

The Greater Oklahoma City Chamber launched its Total Resource Development Campaign in April, kicking off the annual membership engagement effort for the year. Kristin Peck, Cox Communications, and Chris Reen, The Oklahoman Media Company, are leading volunteers in the pursuit of their \$2.8 million campaign goal.

Now in its 25th year, TRDC offers ways to effectively promote your company to the Chamber's 4,000 members by reaching top leaders at the region's most active companies. Through Chamber sponsorship and advertising opportunities, you can invest your marketing budget in reaching an educated and engaged audience.

With specific programs that directly engage with the Chamber's work in Oklahoma City, TRDC gives you the opportunity to reach a highly targeted audience while impacting Oklahoma City's growth.

## **Government Relations Program 2019**

Government Relations Benefactors and Sponsors play a key role in helping the Chamber to further strengthen relationships between local elected officials and the business community. Additionally, they support the Chamber's ongoing advocacy efforts which include passing pro-business legislation, impacting public policy and building partnerships that will enhance the business climate of our state, region and city. Sponsor this program if you want your company brand in front of elected officials and key community leaders throughout the year.

## **Greater Grads Program 2019**

Greater Grads Benefactors support the entire Greater Grads program aimed at recruiting and retaining the talent OKC employers need to fuel the regional economy. Sponsor this program if you want to connect with students, recent graduates and young professionals who will be the future leaders of Oklahoma City.

## **OKConnect Community Orientation Program 2019**

OKConnect focuses on cultivating new leaders and making Oklahoma City's businesses stronger. This high-level orientation program available to Advisor member levels and up helps new-to-market business leaders learn more about Oklahoma City and how to get engaged. Sponsors of this program are highlighted in program material that is marketed to approximately 500 targeted companies during the recruitment process. Sponsor this program if you want to reach high-level business people who are new to Oklahoma City.

## **OKC Public Schools Compact 2018-2019**

The OKC Public Schools Compact works to support the Oklahoma City Public School District through targeted programming, including a focus on literacy and mental health. Sponsor this program to make a statement about the importance of local K-12 education quality and drive community ownership of the Oklahoma City Public Schools and its outcomes.

## **Tinker Leadership Community 2019**

By sponsoring TLC, you will celebrate the history and promote the future of Tinker Air Force Base in Oklahoma City while building relationships with civilian and military leaders engaged in the region's aerospace sector. Sponsor this program to network with a targeted group of aerospace industry decision makers.

In addition to programs, sponsorship and advertising opportunities for Chamber events, publications and websites are available. Sales are already underway and last until July 19. Contact a volunteer on the following page for more information about the Chamber's marketing solutions or visit [www.okcchamber.com/2018trdc](http://www.okcchamber.com/2018trdc).

Special thanks to the companies that make TRDC possible. View a list of campaign sponsors on page 10-11.

# TRDC Volunteer List

Volunteers are standing by to help you connect with the Chamber's engaged members.  
Contact a volunteer today!

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<b>Monica Habeck</b> , American Fidelity Assurance Company.....	523-2000	<b>Robin Walker</b> , Legacy Financial Advisors, LLC.....	470-9193
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<b>Darcie Henderson</b> , CrossFirst Bank.....	418-3766	<b>Brad Willis</b> , Brad Willis Insurance Agency.....	286-3600
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<b>David Howell</b> , The Ace Family of Companies.....	672-4425	<b>Erick Worrell</b> , Saxum.....	605-2003
<b>Gary James</b> , Frankfurt-Short-Bruza Associates.....	840-2931	<b>Chris Zach</b> , BKD CPAs & Advisors.....	606-2580
<b>Jordan Jordanov</b> , American Fidelity Assurance Company.....	416-8665		

To learn more, contact Suzette Ellison, [sellison@okcchamber.com](mailto:sellison@okcchamber.com) or 297-8808.  
View an updated volunteer list at [www.okcchamber.com/2018trdc](http://www.okcchamber.com/2018trdc).

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# Economic Impact of Visitors (cont'd from pg 1)

for the Chamber. "Tourism is big business in Oklahoma City. Thanks to plans for continued investment in our facilities and the dedication of our attractions, we expect Oklahoma City's appeal as a destination to grow."

Beyond providing an increase in sales tax collections, a healthy hospitality industry also has a positive impact on Oklahoma City's national perception. According to research done by the Oklahoma Tourism and Recreation Department, tourism marketing has a halo effect on economic growth. People exposed to tourism advertising were more likely to start a career, launch a business or choose to live in the state. Hosting meetings and events in Oklahoma City also exposes first-time visitors to the area's renaissance, making them more likely to return.

With multiple new facilities planned for the next few years and attraction improvements underway or already completed, Oklahoma City will have an increased ability to attract more conventions and events. Through the MAPS 3 program, the Oklahoma State Fair Park recently added the state-of-the-art Bennett Event Center and made other improvements to support its year-round

event schedule, including many of the horse shows that make Oklahoma City the Horse Show Capital of the World. The Oklahoma City Council also recently opened bids for a \$21 million expansion of the USA Softball Hall of Fame Stadium, the venue that will host the Women's College World Series until 2035. Plans for improvements call for an additional deck of seating and other improvements to the existing facility.

In addition, exciting new facilities will begin to serve the convention and visitor market in the next two years. The MAPS 3-funded Oklahoma City Convention Center will feature 200,000 square feet of exhibition space, a 30,000-square-foot ballroom and 45,000 square feet of dedicated meeting space which will allow Oklahoma City to compete for 80 percent or more of the events held in the United States. The adjacent convention center headquarters hotel, operated by Omni Hotels & Resorts, will add approximately 50,000 square feet of ballroom and meeting space. The nearby Scissortail Park and the connectivity provided by the Oklahoma City Streetcar will provide benefits for Oklahoma City's visitors and residents alike.



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*Massage Therapists*

Ms. Toya Williams ..... 406-5092  
11 NE 11th St., Suite 230  
Oklahoma City, OK 73104  
www.alleviationmassageandtherapy.com  
massageandtherapy.com

**CORE**

**Argon Apartments**

*Apartments*

Mr. Josh Carmody ..... 681-7166  
13600 N Blackwelder Ave.  
Oklahoma City, OK 73134  
www.argonokc.com

**CORE**

**Axis Business Services, Inc.**

*Mailing Machines & Equipment*

Mr. Rich Luft ..... 249-8097  
11200 S Western Ave.  
Edmond, OK 73025  
www.axisok.com

**SENIOR PARTNER++**

**Citizen Potawatomi Nation**

*Tribal Government*

Mr. John "Rocky" Barrett ..... 275-3121  
1601 S. Gordon Cooper Drive  
Shawnee, OK 74801  
www.potawatomi.org

**ADVISOR**

**Clean Oklahoma, LLC**

*Janitorial Services*

Ms. Ginger Sloan ..... 757-0292  
722 N Broadway, Suite Mezzanine  
Oklahoma City, OK 73102-6007  
www.wecleanoklahoma.com

**CORE**

**Commuter Air Technology, Inc.**

*Aerospace Industries*

Mr. Darryl Wilkerson ..... 694-4755  
5600 Philip J. Rhoads Ave.  
Oklahoma City, OK 73008  
www.commuterair.com

**ADVISOR**

**EDGE Productions**

*Audio-Visual Production Services*

Ms. Jane Anderson ..... 265-8400  
5601 Huettner Drive  
Norman, OK 73069-9509  
www.gowithedge.com

**CORE**

**405 Yoga**

*Fitness Centers & Training*

Ms. Merideth VanSant.. (202) 257-3061  
1004 N Hudson Ave.  
Oklahoma City, OK 73102-2602  
www.405yoga.com

**CORE**

**Heartland Payment Systems**

*Internet - Business Solutions*

Mr. Marshall Bivens ..... 531-3339  
3932 S Boulevard  
Edmond, OK 73013  
www.heartlandpaymentsystems.com

**CORE**

**Jemco Properties**

*Real Estate*

Mr. Jimmy Martz ..... 256-8816  
P.O. Box 850595  
Yukon, OK 73085  
www.jemcopropertysolutions.com

**ADVISOR**

**Kwan's Kitchen, Inc.**

*Restaurants*

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3031 W Memorial Road  
Oklahoma City, OK 73134  
www.kwans.kitchen

**ADVISOR**

**Meta Special Aerospace, LLC**

*Aerospace Industries*

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Oklahoma City, OK 73008

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*Consultants*

Ms. Sherry Dale ..... 217-3880  
6608 N Western Ave., Suite 623  
Oklahoma City, OK 73116  
www.mettise.com

**CORE**

**Residence Inn Oklahoma City North / Quail Springs**

*Hotels & Motels*

Mr. Eric Lyman ..... 286-1020  
13900 McAuley Blvd.  
Oklahoma City, OK 73134  
www.marriott.com/okcxw

**CORE**

**Silvertree Solutions**

*Computers - Software & Services*

Mr. Charles Harger ..... 577-6867  
424 Sage Brush Road  
Yukon, OK 73099-6892  
www.silvertree.solutions

**CORE**

**Valair Aviation**

*Aircraft Servicing & Maintenance*

Mr. Darryl Wilkerson ..... 789-5000  
5600 Philip J. Rhoads Ave.  
Oklahoma City, OK 73008  
www.valairaviation.com

**ADVISOR**

**Pillar Contracting, Inc.**

*Contractors - General*

Mr. Richard Kyle Plemons ..... 721-9992  
7408 NW 85th St.  
Oklahoma City, OK 73132  
www.pillarcontracting.com

## Members Upgrade Their Support of the Chamber

The following member companies increased their investment in the Chamber, demonstrating strong support of the Chamber's efforts to drive the region's economy. To increase your investment, contact the membership division of the Chamber at 405-297-8949 or [info@okcchamber.com](mailto:info@okcchamber.com).

# GRAND OPENINGS

Congratulations to Chamber members on their recent Grand Openings! All Chamber members are welcome to attend Grand Openings. To view more photos, see the schedule of upcoming Grand Openings or subscribe to the Grand Openings calendar, visit [www.okcchamber.com/grandopenings](http://www.okcchamber.com/grandopenings).



**HideoutArt**  
911 W. Britton Road  
Oklahoma City, OK 73114



**Vault 405**  
10 N. Broadway  
Edmond, OK 73034



**FirstLight Home Care**  
4301 NW 63<sup>rd</sup> St., Suite 309  
Oklahoma City, OK 73116



**La Vida Fearless Counseling**  
3000 United Founders Blvd., Suite 124  
Oklahoma City, OK 73112



**Bank of Oklahoma**  
499 W. Sheridan Ave.  
Oklahoma City, OK 73102



**Enel Green Power**  
119 N. Robinson Ave., Suite 250  
Oklahoma City, OK 73102



**Kwan's Kitchen, Inc.**  
3031 W. Memorial Road  
Oklahoma City, OK 73134



**Thairapy Lounge Salon**  
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Oklahoma City, OK 73120

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# ECONOMIC INDICATORS

## Oklahoma City Ranks Among Best Cities for New Small Businesses

### The 10 Best Places for New Small Businesses

- LendingTree ranked the best cities for new small businesses and Oklahoma City tied for No. 10.
- The analysis used data from more than 80,000 queries submitted by new small business owners seeking loan offers.
- LendingTree grouped the queries by city and compared the 50 most populated metros taking into consideration both annual revenue and profitability.

Rank	Metro	Final Score	Average of Annual Revenue	% of Companies Profitable*
1	Sacramento, CA	90	\$315,611	84.3%
2	Grand Rapids, MI	89	\$293,495	85.2%
3	Portland, OR	83	\$317,765	83.2%
4	Knoxville, TN	73	\$241,841	86.8%
5	Denver, CO	73	\$311,744	82.0%
6	Seattle, WA	70	\$288,586	82.1%
7	Tulsa, OK	69	\$265,217	83.7%
8	Albuquerque, NM	68	\$273,492	83.1%
9	Fresno, CA	65	\$292,599	81.5%
10	Los Angeles, CA	64	\$338,350	81.0%
<b>10</b>	<b>Oklahoma City, OK</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>\$238,758</b>	<b>84.0%</b>

For comprehensive Economic Indicators and Regional Data, please visit your Greater Oklahoma City Chamber Economic Development Division at [www.greateroklahomacity.com/economicindicators](http://www.greateroklahomacity.com/economicindicators) or contact Eric Long, Research Economist – 297-8976; [elong@okcchamber.com](mailto:elong@okcchamber.com)

\*Percentage of businesses that reported they were profitable at the time of their queries. Source: Lendingtree.com, 2018.

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## LOOK INSIDE!

- 2 Chamber Launches Small Business Newsletter
- 6 Upcoming Chamber Events
- 8 Connect with the Chamber's Audience Through TRDC
- 13 Welcome New Members

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